

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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R 030637Z JUN 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4223
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 2666

JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

AMMAN PLEASE PASS OMB REPRESENTATIVE ZUZA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINT MARR MORG MPOL
SUBJ: PAKRADOUNI ON THE ARMY

REF: BEIRUT 1885

1. SUMMARY. LEADING PHALANGE POLITBURO MODERATE KARIM
PAKRADOUNI BELIEVES THAT REGIONALIZATION OF THE ARMY, AS
PROPOSED BY CHRISTIAN HARDLINERS, WOULD FOSTER PARTITION.
PROPOSAL TO KEEP THE ARMY TOGETHER BY REPLACING THE PRESENT
ARMY COMMAND SYSTEM WITH A MULTICONFESSIONAL COMMAND COUNCIL
WOULD VIOLATE A PRINCIPLE OF COMMAND AS WELL AS THE ABILITY
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OF THE ARMY TO REACT EFFECTIVELY TO INTERNAL CRISES.
PAKRADOUNI PROPOSES AN ARTFUL COMPROMISE OF PRESENT

POSSIBILITIES AND THE LONG-TERM GOAL OF NATIONAL UNITY
BY CREATING NOT TWO BUT THREE TYPES OF MILITARY ZONES,
CHRISTIAN, MOSLEM, AND MIXED, WITH THE LATTER TO BE
EXPANDED IN A LATER PHASE TO ELIMINATE THE OTHER TWO

ZONES. HE SAW THE ROLE OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE LEBANESE ARMY AS PROVIDING ASSISTANCE IN THE INTELLIGENCE FIELD AS WELL AS EQUIPMENT AND STAFF TRAINING. PAKRADOUNI ALSO HAS SOME INTERESTING COMMENTS ON THE DENOUEMENT AT BILLA, ON SARKIS, AND ON CAMILLE CHAMOUN'S CURRENT OUTLOOK. END SUMMARY.

2. DATT AND EMBOFF CALLED ON KARIM PAKRADOUNI MAY 27. (PAKRADOUNI HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD EMBOFF HE WANTED TO DISCUSS IN DETAIL FUTURE OF LEBANESE ARMY.)

3. THREE CONCEPTS. PAKRADOUNI SAID THERE EXISTED THREE BROAD CONCEPTS ON THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY:

A. REGIONALIZATION. INITIALLY THERE SHOULD BE MOSLEM AND CHRISTIAN SEGMENTS OF THE ARMY, BOTH RESPONDING TO AN INTEGRATED NATIONAL ARMY COMMAND, GARRISONED IN THE RESPECTIVE CONFESSIONAL AREAS OF THE COUNTRY. THIS WAS ADVOCATED BY KFUR FRONT HARD-LINERS, SUCH AS THE CHAMOUNS, AND BECHIR GEMAYEL. THIS CONCEPT WAS TANTAMOUNT TO PARTITION.

B. MULTICONFESSIONALIZATION. THE ARMY WOULD BE CONFESSIONALLY MIXED, BUT IN PLACE OF AN ARMY COMMANDER THERE WOULD BE A MULTICONFESSIONAL COUNCIL AT THE TOP TO MAKE IMPORTANT DECISIONS. THIS APPROACH IS FAVORED BY SOME SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS WHO FEEL IT WILL LEND CONFESSIONAL LEGITIMACY TO UNPOPULAR COMMAND DECISIONS. ITS WEAKNESS WAS THAT IT WOULD NOT BE ABLE

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TO ACT DECISIVELY IN TIME OF CRISIS.

C. PROVISIONAL DECENTRALIZATION. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE HAD BEEN TALKING WITH A NUMBER OF CONCERNED PEOPLE (PHALANGE MODERATES), AND THAT THEY HAD EVOLVED IN THEIR MINDS A SCHEME WHICH THEY BELIEVED WOULD OVERCOME THE WEAKNESSES OF THE TWO AFOREMENTIONED SCHEMES. IN A FIRST PHASE, THERE WOULD BE THREE TYPES OF ARMY BARRACKS: CHRISTIAN, MOSLEM, AND MIXED. OF THE APPROXIMATELY 18 ARMY BASES PERHAPS HALF WOULD BE LOCATED IN CONFESSIONALLY MIXED AREAS AND WOULD HAVE CONFESSIONALLY MIXED GARRISONS. SUCH AREAS WOULD INCLUDE THE BEKAA, THE CHOUF AND THE AKKAR. THOSE OFFICERS AND TROOPS WHO COULD NOT LIVE WITH MEMBERS OF THE OTHER FAITH WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO BARRACKS IN AREAS EXCLUSIVELY OF THEIR OWN FAITH. COMMANDERS AND OTHER KEY PERSONNEL WOULD BE SELECTED ON THE BASIS OF THEIR LOYALTY TO THE STATE AND THEIR ACCEPTABILITY TO THE

OTHER SIDE. IN A SECOND PHASE, THE NUMBER OF BASES AND THE AREAS THEY COVERED WOULD BE GRADUALLY EXPANDED, UNTIL THE ARMY IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY WAS EFFECTIVELY INTEGRATED. THE WHOLE PROCESS WOULD DEPEND ON THE POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS OF ARMY COMMANDER VICTOR KHOURY AND ON HIS ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND PROMOTE KEY OFFICERS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH THE CHRISTIAN AND MOSLEM CAMPS, SUCH AS SAMI KHATIB AND AHMED EL-HAJJ. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE HOPED KHOURY WOULD PROVE TO BE FULLY ACCEPTABLE TO ALL LEBANESE SOLDIERS, AS ZAS FUAD CHEHAB IN HIS TIME.

4. PAKRADOUNI ASKED WHAT THE USG THOUGHT ABOUT SUCH A PLAN. HE THOUGHT THE U.S. ARMY MIGHT HAVE HAD EXPERIENCE WITH INTEGRATION PROBLEMS, LESSONS OF WHICH COULD BE USEFULLY APPLIED IN LEBANON.

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XTM U.S. ASSISTANCE TO LEBANESE ARMY. PAKRADOUNI SAID THERE WERE THREE AREAS IN WHICH U.S. COULD ASSIST IN REBUILDING THE LEBANESE ARMY:

A. TRAINING. U.S. ASSISTANCE WAS NOT NEEDED FOR BASIC TRAINING, OR EVEN CERTAIN TYPES OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING WHICH COULD BE

OBTAINED FROM SOURCES CLOSER TO HOME, (E.G., HE THOUGHT THE EGYPTIANS HAD BECOME QUITE PROFICIENT, ALBEIT ALONG SOVIET LINES, IN MILITARY ENGINEERING AND THE JORDANIANS HAVE EXCELLENT MILITARY TRAINING BASES.) HOWEVER THE U.S. COULD MOST USEFULLY PROVIDE ADVANCED COURSES AND COMMAND AND STAFF TRAINING.

B. INTELLIGENCE. PAKRADOUNI SAID, AND EMBOFFS AGREED, THAT LEBANESE ARMY INTELLIGENCE GATHERING CAPABILITY WAS VERY WEAK AT PRESENT. HE THOUGHT THE USG COULD BE OF REAL ASSISTANCE
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IN THIS AREA, BUT DID NOT SPECIFY DETAILS.

C. EQUIPMENT. PAKRADOUNI AND EMBOFFS AGREED THAT A MAJOR PROBLEM WAS HOW TO ASSURE THAT EQUIPMENT FOR LEBANESE ARMY DID NOT SLIP INTO HANDS OF CHRISTIAN MILITIAS.

6. SEQUEL TO BILLA. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE HAD WORKED OUT ARRANGEMENT DIRECTLY WITH SYRIAN COS SHIHABI TO CALM SITUATION AFTER SYRIANS HAD RESPONDED TO LOCAL CHRISTIAN ARMED RESISTANCE AT BILLA WITH A "PUNITIVE EXPEDITION." (BEIRUT 2370 AND 2399) HE SAID HE TOLD SHIHABI THAT PHALANGISTS HAD SUBSTANTIAL CACHE OF WEAPONS NEAR VILLAGE, WHICH PHALANGISTS FEARED SYRIANS WOULD SEIZE, AND THEY WOULD THEREFORE RESIST VIOLENTLY. SHIHABI REPLIED THAT SYRIAN ARMY COULD NOT AVOID RESPONDING WITH FORCE AFTER NUMBER OF SYRIAN SOLDIERS HAD BEEN KILLED. THE TWO HAD THEN AGREED THAT SYRIANS WOULD ALLOW PHALANGISTS 48 HOURS TO EVACUATE HEAVY WEAPONS FROM THE AREA, BEFORE THE SYRIANS MARCHED IN. PHALANGISTS IN FACT DID WITHDRAW, WITH THEIR HEAVY WEAPONS, UNDER THE EYES OF SYRIAN TROOPS DEPLOYED IN THE SURROUNDING HILLS. AS PART OF THE PACKAGE, BECHIR GEMAYEL WAS SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED BY THE PHALANGE POLITBURO TO CEASE MAKING ANTI-SYRIAN STATEMENTS ON THE MATTER.

7. U.S.-ARAB CHIEFS OF STATE TALKS. PAKRADOUNI ASKED ABOUT ASAD-CARTER MEETING IN GENEVA AND FAHD VISIT TO WASHINGTON. EMBOFF SAID INDICATIONS WERE THAT ASAD MEETING HAD GONE QUITE WELL. THERE WAS NOT COMPLETE AGREEMENT ON EVERY POINT, BUT EACH SIDE HAD SOUGHT TO MAKE ITS POSITIONS CLEAR IN AN AMICABLE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. EMBOFF SAID IT WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT FAHD VISIT TO WASHINGTON, BUT NOTED THAT TALK OF USE OF OIL EMBARGO AS WEAPON IN MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT CONTEXT SEEMED TO ARISE FROM JOURNALISTS' QUESTIONS RATHER THAN FROM THE TALKS THEMSELVES.

8. LIKUD ELECTORAL VICTORY. PAKRADOUNI THOUGHT THAT THE LIKUD VICTORY IN ISRAEL STRENGTHENED PALESTINIAN POSITION IN ARAB
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WORLD. HE ASKED EMBOFF QUITE SERIOUSLY IF LIKUD GOVERNMENT MIGHT UNDERTAKE ANOTHER PREVENTIVE WAR. EMBOFF SIAD HE HAD NO INFORMATION ON ISRAELI INTENTIONS. PAKRADOUNI SPECULATED THAT MR. BEGIN'S RECENT ILLNESS MIGHT REALLY BE A PLOY TO GET HIM AND HIS HARDLINE STATEMENTS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY OUT OF THE LIMELIGHT OF U.S. PUBLIC ATTENTION.

9. SAUDIS AND CAIRO ACCORD. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE NOW BELIEVED THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO A STRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO ACCORD IN RECENT MONTHS HAD BEEN THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH PUBLICLY IN LEBANON KUWAIT HAD BEEN TAKING MOST OF THE FLAK.

10. SARKIS' PERSONAL SECURITY. PAKRADOUNI SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WAS SERIOUS DANGER OF AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AGAINST PRESIDENT SARKIS. HE THOUGHT SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AT BAABDA PALACE WERE INADEQUATE AND WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE LACK OF INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION WHICH COULD ENHANCE THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL SECURITY.

11. SARKIS AND CHAMOUN. PAKRADOUNI SAID THAT CAMILLE CHAMOUN SEEMED TO REALIZE NOW THAT HE RECENTLY HAD BEEN PROFILING HIMSELF AS TOO INTRANSIGENT. FURTHERMORE, PRESIDENT SARKIS HAD SEEN CHAMOUN SEVERAL TIMES IN RECENT WEEKS IN MAJOR EFFORT TO GET HIM TO STOP CREATING OBSTACLES FOR THE GOVERNMENT. PAKRADOUNI (WHO SAID JOCLARLY THAT ONE OF HIS FAVORITE HOBBIES WAS "CHAMOUNOLOGY") SAID CHAMOUN WAS NOW CONVINCED THAT SARKIS WOULD "FAIL" ANYWAY. THEREFORE, CHAMOUN SAW HIS OWN BEST INTEREST IN NOT OPPOSING THE PRESIDENT, LEST HE (CHAMOUN) BE BLAMED FOR THE COLLAPSE WHICH WAS IN ANY CASE INEVITABLE.

12. FAROUK ABI LAMA. PAKRADOUNI COMMENTED THAT THE NEW DG OF THE SURETE GENERALE, FAROUK ABI LAMA, WAS A SKILLFUL LAWYER, AND DOUBTLESSLY LOYAL TO PRESIDENT SARKIS. HOWEVER, HE LACKED THE TECHNICAL SKILLS FOR HIS VITALLY IMPORTANT JOB. PAKRADOUNI THOUGHT AN EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO FIND SOME

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HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL POLICE-INTELLIGENCE ADVISORS ABROAD, PERHAPS EVEN FROM THE U.S., TO ASSIST.

13. COMMENT: PAKRADOUNI CONTINUES TO FULLY AND ACTIVELY SUPPORT SARKIS, AND THE SYRIAN-LEBANESE CONNECTION, AND TO SERVE AS AN INFLUENTIAL VOICE FOR MODERATION WITHIN THE KFUR FRONT. WHILE STILL BASICALLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE RECOVERY OF THE COUNTRY (AT ONE POINT HE SAID HE THOUGHT

LEBANON WOULD BE "BACK TO NORMAL" IN ABOUT THREE YEARS),
HE IS DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT SOME CURRENT MAJOR PROBLEMS, AND
SEEMED TO REFLECT, ALBEIT UNINTENTIONALLY, A CERTAIN APPRE-
HENSION ABOUT THE BASIC VIABILITY OF THE SARKIS REGIME.
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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, MARR, MORG, MPOL, LE, (PAKARADOUNI, KARIM)
To: STATE DOD
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